

AKUN ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Our Mission and About Us

Our mission is to improve the lives of those in desperate situations and in personal crisis by providing shelter, food, education, and hope.

AKUN was founded in 2015 by a small group of women who wanted to make a difference. All members of our team are volunteers. We are small but mighty – demonstrated through the many accomplishments we have achieved over the years. We focus on raising awareness of desperate situations. We work with communities, to help grow their community. Realizing that the children are the foundation of the future of the communities we help, our programs are centered on the children and their families. We work to give them hope and a path out of poverty and into a better future.

President's Letter

First of all, a big thank you to our team all over the world that has worked so hard to keep AKUN going and thriving during these challenging times. The AKUN team currently has members in the United States (Alaska and Texas), in the United Kingdom (Scotland and England), and in France. And we are fortunate to partner with dedicated people in the Kampot Province in Cambodia to bring our mission to life. We just celebrated our 6th anniversary since our start in 2015!

In 2020, we continued to operate and fundraise within the boundaries of what was possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to acknowledge and thank all of our donors without whom our programs could not be implemented.

We have supported four students to further their education at university and online. We continued supporting one of our students who became ill and was unable to pursue her studies. The impact of this program is huge because these students, now full of hope for the future, will become the next educated generation to break the cycle of poverty.

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 situation, our Sunday Feeding Program (SFP) was stopped for most of the year but we continued to help by giving a compensation for the usual salary to the staff. We kept operating only when the local regulations permitted and our local leader advised that it was safe. Despite the challenges of 2020, we were able to expand the SFP program to a new location: Tropeang Skun in the Kampot Province of Cambodia. There, a teacher independently started some basic classes for the local children. We feel that education is the fundamental basis for the long-term fight against poverty and hopefully we can continue to help with this initiative in 2021.

I truly hope that the vaccinations against COVID-19 will help the world contain this destructive virus in 2021 and that our programs will continue to fulfill our mission to support desperate people.

I am very proud of the big impact that our small organization has on those we support and I hope 2021 will be an even better year.

Thank you again to all who help AKUN and let's continue our hard work!

Sunday Feeding Program 2020

This program began in 2008 and has been funded by AKUN since 2016. The program feeds up to 180 children each Sunday, throughout the year, on the grounds of St. Joseph's Church in Chumkiri and in the village of Phum Or both in Kampot Province, Cambodia.

The program, under the guidance of Fr. Gianluca, is run by a group of teenage volunteers, who also organise a scout program, prior to the feeding program each week. It is open to all children in the area. The children arrive on foot, by bicycle, and on the rowie. The volunteers ensure the children wash their hands before eating and all the children receive either rice porridge, known locally as bobo, or occasionally they have a cup of Milo and a small loaf of French bread which they are able to eat and/or take home.

In September 2019, Fr. Gianluca requested that AKUN extend the program to a third village, Tropeang Skun. A new library/education building was being erected during 2019 and Fr. Gianluca was keen for the Sunday Feeding Program to expand to feed the children there. It would help the program reach new children and enable some who were travelling to the program in Chumkiri to go to a Sunday Feeding Program closer to their homes. AKUN agreed to fund the program for 1 year to see if it was viable financially for AKUN as an organisation to raise funds for it and to assess the value of the program to the children in the community. This could be measured with attendance and community feedback from Fr. Gianluca.

With the addition of a new village and the increased expense, \$30 extra per week, Linda Franks, AKUN President, agreed to raise funds for the new program during 2020. Her Facebook

fundraiser raised \$ (£291) and with further fundraising reached \$419. The Tropeang Skun Sunday Feeding Program began on February 9th, 2020.

In Cambodia, each program has a co-ordinator who organises the program in their village to ensure the program runs efficiently. The co-ordinators are: Danoun in Chumkiri; Pu John in Phum Or and Rem in Tropeang Skun.

The SFP, now in 3 villages ran until March 11th when the Cambodian Government halted large group gatherings due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During the time they were unable to attend the program, the children did receive a visit by the youth group in small groups, to explain the importance of handwashing. The program was suspended until October 25th, when about 50 children were able to meet in Chumkiri. The program ran there until November 30th when the Ministry of Education closed schools again, until January 11th, 2021, due to a small Covid-19 outbreak in Cambodia.

While the program was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, salaries continued to be paid for the 3 program coordinators by Fr. Gianluca. The Board decided to cover these costs, which the staff rely upon, via the general fund.

Whilst the program was not operating, the AKUN Board made the decision to ask all donors if they would prefer their donation to go to the nearest date in 2021 or into AKUN's general fund. All but one donor chose to transfer their donation to the nearest date in 2021. Donors were asked if they wanted certificates for their new dates and new ones were sent in November.

How the Sponsorship Works

We asked donors to sponsor a Sunday in 2020 for Chumkiri and Phum Or up to the \$70 needed for both programs. Donors choose a Sunday often a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion and receive a personalized certificate via email. They are able to see monthly updates of the children on Facebook.

It was decided that weekly SFP sponsors were not going to be sought for the Tropeang Skun SFP so as not to confuse donors for the first year. We were concerned about raising the amount of the weekly sponsorship to \$100. Because the SFP in Tropeang Skun was a one year commitment, we decided to run it separately during 2020.

Amount required for the Chumkiri and PhumOr programs: $\$70 \times 52 = \3640

Amount donated for 2020: $\$3178.89$

Amount required for Tropeang Skun: $\$30 \times 52 = \1560

Amount donated: $\$419$

Due to Covid-19, all active fundraising for the SFP ceased in March 2020. We did receive an individual donation from a previous donor later in the year.

Chumkiri and PhumOr Sponsorship Funds

Year	Weeks sponsored	Number of donors	Total raised via sponsorship
2016	28	15	\$1940
2017	28	15	\$1985
2018	52+	18	\$3680.55
2019	52+	22	\$3663.55
2020	44	25	\$3178.89

For 2020, the money was raised through: Giving Tuesday Campaign on Facebook, starting in November 2019; two school fairs in England in December 2019; an email sent in November 2019 to previous donors and a follow up email in January 2020.

Donor Information

Year	Money raised Chumkiri and PhumOr	Number of donors	Number of new donors	New donor donations	% of money raised
2019	\$3663.55	23	8	\$1144.76*	31%
2020	\$3178.89	23	6	\$512.49**	16.12%

As in previous years, all donors received a certificate via email, to keep or give to the person they were donating in honour of, though a couple of people didn't require one. A new certificate is designed each year using a photo from the previous year's program.

* includes \$811.61 from French Dinner, Banchory Scotland

**subject to exchange rate

Monies received

In addition to sponsorship funds, Barbara Sanders raised £100 with an AKUN stall at the Windermere Christmas Fayre. Langdale CE Primary School raised £111.53 for AKUN via the Kendal Annual Charities Christmas Tree Festival. Both events were held in December 2019 in Cumbria, England.

For the Tropeang Skun program, Linda Franks decided to raise money via her Facebook fundraiser and then through taking part in summer fairs, collecting donations for scarves, jewelry, etc. Weekly sponsors were not sought, although all donors to Linda's Facebook fundraiser were contacted and sent certificates if they choose.

Donations for the 2020 sponsorship program mainly came via: PayPal(6); Facebook (14); plus 3 checks. Recordkeeping of our donor information for Chumkiri and PhumOr donations is kept by Barbara Sanders, the vice president.

Updating donors/raising awareness of SFP

Donors were updated via a Facebook post at the end of each month until March. Photos showing the children at the program from that month are sent by SreyMom from the program in Chumkiri. We also updated Facebook with photos from Tropeang Skun from February. The website was updated with photos from the Tropeang Skun program and updates regarding the Covid 19 situation were posted in March and November.

A post-Christmas Party email will be sent in February 2021 to enable donors to see the children in all 3 villages as they performed the Christmas story and received a small gift.

As not all donors are on Facebook, the post-Christmas email is important for reaching out and communicating with our donors, so they get to see the children they are sponsoring.

Strategic Plan Results from 2020

As we are always looking for ways to progress and improve this program, these are some of the plans we had:

1. Updating of the www.supportakun.org page for SFP to be done quarterly, to increase the accuracy and timely information given to donors.
 - This was interrupted by Covid-19 as we had no information to update until June. The page was updated twice in 2020.
2. The Christmas email for 2020 to be sent in January.
 - The post-Christmas email was not sent in January as planned. The aim for 2022 will be to send the email in January.
3. In 2020, a June mid-year email to update all donors with how the program has done in the first 6 months.
 - The update was sent to all donors and helps raise awareness so needs to continue to be sent each year.

Strategic Plans for 2021

1. In November 2020 the decision was made to raise funds for all 3 villages under the SFP jointly in 2021, with Barbara Sanders and Linda Franks working together to raise the funds needed. Barbara will continue to take responsibility for the organization of the program regarding sponsors, certificates and bookkeeping.
2. The target date for the 2021 holiday email will be in January 2022.

Scholarship Program

This program was created in 2018 to honour the life of Sarah Meredith Fouad, the daughter of one of AKUN's members, who passed away at the age of 19. The program currently sponsors higher education scholarships for qualified students in rural Cambodia and is awarded on a

yearly basis, renewable until degree or certification is received, as long as passing grades are achieved.

There is a selection process and well defined criteria a student must meet in order to qualify for scholarship. All current students have met AKUN's criteria and have been verified by Fr. Gianluca, our contact in Cambodia. It is imperative to the program's success to have someone who can verify student details, the course program, and handle funds distribution.

Program Funding

Annual sponsorship goal for program: \$3000

Balance from 2019: \$3,463.27

Amount donated 2020: \$3,441.31

It costs approximately \$500-600 per year to sponsor a student scholarship to university or trade school in Cambodia. Three students were sponsored in 2020. All three students are currently pursuing 4 year degree programs. Two of the students received direct sponsorship from the Aberlour & Speyside Rotary Club and two other families. The third student received partial direct sponsorship supplemented by general sponsorship funds to cover the balance.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the students spent most of the year studying online from home, thereby reducing their living expenses. Any remaining funds not used in 2020 are to be carried over to 2021 to be used for their tuition/expenses that year. In addition, the funds for Em Sophea were returned to the scholarship fund, and general funds were used to support her trips to Phnom Penh for monthly medical treatments.

In 2020, the program raised \$3,441.31, consisting of: \$1259 from the annual Facebook fundraiser, \$500 from Shell's double matching donation program, and \$1682.31 from direct sponsorship by four families and the Rotary Club of Aberlour & Speyside. An additional \$600 was donated and will be received in 2021 via Shell's double matching program. The balance on our books is intended to support these students through the end of their studies.

Scholarship Students

STUDENT NAME	DEGREE	YEAR	SCHOOL
Set Raksa	Rural Development	3 of 4	The Royal University of Phnom Penh
Seun Kim Chhan	Accounting	3 of 4	National University of Management, Phnom Penh
Oem SokLa	Electrician	Graduated!	Don Bosco, Phnom Penh
In Srey Touch	Chemistry	2 of 4	The Royal University of Phnom Penh
Em Sophea	No longer in program due to serious health issues		

Program Communication

Updates on students' progress are posted on Facebook and AKUN's website at least twice per year, after each semester is completed.

Strategic Plans Going Forward

Some plans we have to improve overseeing this program:

- Identify families and/or organizations to provide direct sponsorship of current students by July, to ensure sufficient funds are available for new students to receive scholarships each year.
- Establish a regular reporting schedule and guidelines for students to provide feedback on their educational progress.

Housing Program

Strategic Plans Going Forward

At the end of 2019, under the advice of Fr Gianluca, it was decided to stop this program for one year because of tensions in the community and potential for corruption. The Board decided not to restart the program for 2021. We will evaluate again in 2022.

Financial Summary

Like much of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the workings of AKUN during 2020. The Sunday Feeding Program was suspended for a period of time and our scholarship students transitioned from in person classes to those held online. However, our donors remained faithful and contributed generously and we are thankful for that. We ended the year with a balance in excess of \$12,000 and ready to continue funding our projects as the year began.

Please see the above sections on the Sunday Feeding Program and Scholarship Program for details.